

What's the Rush?

t

“Perhaps have a spot of tea and some lovely scones with a bit of raspberry jam on the side.”

his month we honor the firm of Applebee & Freres, Pty., Ltd., of Liondown-on-the-Yob, NSW, Australia. Applebee, or as it is informally known locally, Woolenthralongabongdong (an Aboriginal word meaning literally “dis house belong you big discount”), is a dental supply company that has shaken the industry to its foundations by marketing products with hitherto unheard-of attributes.

Sir Geoffrey Graeme Nigel Applebee, OBE, MBE, FICD, SPCA, 93, senior partner of the firm explained his innovative ideas: “We here at Applebee & Freres, Pty., Ltd., aka Woolenthralongabongdong, of Liondown-on-the-Yob, NSW, ah, I’m sorry, old chap, what was the question? Oh, yiss ... we have had the growing suspicion over the last 40 years that dentistry is moving too fast. Rapport with patients has been sacrificed on the altar of high-volume production. It’s a bloody shame is what it is! High-volume production required faster instruments, materials and techniques to cope with the increased demand. Or was it the other way ’round? No matter, it flouts every dictate of common sense, so Applebee &

Freres, Pty., Ltd., and so on and so forth have come up with the answer.”

Sir Geoffrey adjusted his cannula, took a few hits off his O₂ flask and went on to excoriate Robert Nelson as the “flaming twit” who developed the first commercial air turbine handpiece, thus starting the downward spiral of dentistry “to hell in a handbasket.” The 400,000 rpm air turbine, he claimed, begat the carbide bur that begat the extra coarse diamonds and, ultimately, begat the vaporizing lasers.

Simultaneously, Sir Geoffrey wheezed, some idiot invented composite resins and eventually curing lights that keep getting faster and curing deeper. “Where will it all end?” he demanded querulously.

Applebee, on a roll now, decries faster-setting cements, bloody fools who want their teeth bleached pure white in 45 minutes, and the brutish dentists, sounding new depths of swinishness who cater to their demands.

Taking the buttons off the foils, Sir Geoffrey prepared to eviscerate the concept of high-volume dentistry and the almost certain demise of the sacred doctor/patient relationship should he fail in his joust with this particular windmill. He was especially incensed by those progressive dentists who take advantage of delegating tasks to qualified assistants to the point where their only contribution to a given procedure is to greet the patient, issue instructions and decamp to the next operatory. He charitably characterized them as “detestable spivs who’d slit your bloody weasand for a florin.”

“May a pox fly away with them,” he bleated.

Time for Sir Geoffrey’s medication and a nap, so one of the freres, young Mr.

Titus Applebee, 91, carried on, his den-



“You espy any long queues impatiently panting
for your ministrations? I think not!
Take time to smell the eugenol, Sonny!”

Continued from Page 358

tures rattling a curious counterpoint to his ancient respiratory apparatus. We pressed for an explanation of just what it is that Woolentharalongabongdong is producing to warrant the “unheard of attributes” being applied to their output.

The brothers Applebee agree that *greed*, thinly disguised as *efficiency* is the motivation behind the manic quest for speed in the profession today. To reverse this deplorable condition, their company’s engineers and scientists have developed a line of equipment and consumables guaranteed to slow the practice of dentistry down to a more genteel pace.

For example, Applebee’s dental chair takes a full 30 minutes to go from upright to full back. Applebee no longer makes a high-speed handpiece, but features a slow-speed unit powered by rubber bands with a governor limiting its speed to just over 400 rpm. Advertising brochures for the Applebee “Slo-Mo,” as it is called, promises that full crown preps can now be handily accomplished in just four appointments when used in conjunction with their “super-fine” nonabrasive stone burs.

The company still makes a polyvinyl impression material, but has added a retardant to the mix, slowing the final set down to a more reasonable six hours. This gives dentist and patient plenty of time to get to know each other better, young Mr. Titus pointed out. “Perhaps have a spot of tea and some lovely scones with a bit of raspberry jam on the side,” he suggested.

Digital radiography raises the hackles of the Woolentharalongabongdong etc. as a prime example of a speed-crazed world gone mad. The company touts their own X-ray machine as a re-

finement of technology borrowed from earlier Daguerreotype equipment. Applebee radiographs have a warm sepia tone that is said to soften the bad news that ordinary X-rays frequently reveal. Many patients, Mr. Titus reported, have taken intraoral scenes they are particularly fond of and given them pride-of-place atop the Steinway.

Naysayers who express qualms anent the decrease in production are given short shrift by the Applebees. “Look outside your office door,” commanded Sir Gregory who has suddenly regained consciousness and is enjoying the aromatherapy of a fine Panatela. “You espy any long queues impatiently panting for your ministrations? I think not! Take time to smell the eugenol, Sonny!”

The “less is more” philosophy as espoused by Applebee & Freres has captured the attention of not only dentists, but their business managers as well.

“As a viable concept,” reported Fiscal Deficiencies, the Chapter 11 experts who handled our affairs, “it has some merit, provided you are willing to live in the back of your van and sup at the Midnight Mission. Our calculations indicated, for example, that with the Applebee regimen in place, based on their two-patient-a-day recommendation, a one-surface posterior composite would have to fetch a fee of \$1,718.35 in order for you to stay in business.”

That certainly seems acceptable to us, and as soon as we can lay on a supply of day-old scones, some sugar-free jam and a pot of Earle’s Olde English Darjeeling, we are slipping quietly into snychromesh compound low. If this punctilio attracts you, join us. CDA